United Nations A/49/PV.95

General Assembly
Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

95th Meeting
Friday, 23 December 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy ..... (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Agenda item 22 ***(continued)***

Assistance in mine clearance:

Report of the Secretary-General (A/49/357 and Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/49/L.8/Rev.1)

Amendments (A/49/L.11/Rev.2, A/49/L.12, A/49/L.13)

The President (*interpretation from French*): Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its debate on item 22 at the 45th plenary meeting, on 26 October last.

The Assembly now has before it a revised draft resolution contained in document A/49/L.8/Rev.1, and amendments thereto contained in documents A/49/L.11/Rev.2, A/49/L.12 and A/49/L.13.

I now call on the representative of Germany to introduce the revised draft resolution contained in document A/49/L.8/Rev.1.

Mr. Rudolph (Germany): I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its acceding States, Austria, Finland and Sweden.

I have the honour to introduce the revised draft resolution on assistance in mine clearance, contained in document A/49/L.8/Rev.1, on behalf of the sponsors. I am pleased to announce at this juncture that Congo has joined the group of sponsors.

When we introduced the original draft resolution on 25 October 1994, we spoke about the tremendous humanitarian problem caused by the presence of mines and other unexploded devices and their serious and lasting consequences for the populations of affected countries. We expressed our conviction that the draft resolution reflected the international community's high degree of concern at the devastating effects of mines and other unexploded devices in countries emerging from armed conflict. We therefore felt that it was appropriate for this draft resolution to be adopted without a vote.

Now, almost two months later, after intensive consultations, we have finally reached solutions for all the concerns raised. In order to do so, we have inserted new language into the draft resolution as follows:

In the fifth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 9, respectively, the General Assembly would recognize the importance of recording the location of mines and would call upon States, especially those that have the capacity to do so, to provide information and technical and material assistance.

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This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Operative paragraph 8 now contains a more specific enumeration of mine-clearance activities that are to be coordinated by the United Nations.

Operative paragraph 10 speaks of promoting scientific research aimed at the rapid advancement of mine detecting and clearance technology.

In the new operative paragraph 11, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to consider the convening, as early as possible, of an international meeting on mine clearance, to include a meeting of experts and a meeting of potential donors, in order to promote the work of the United Nations and international cooperation in this field.

In the new tenth preambular paragraph, the General Assembly would bear in mind that significant progress needs to be achieved regarding the revision and amendment of the United Nations inhumane weapons Convention and the adoption of an export moratorium.

In the new twelfth preambular paragraph, the General Assembly would welcome the efforts made by the United Nations to foster the establishment of national mine-clearance capacities in countries where mines constitute a serious threat to the safety, health and lives of the local population.

On behalf of the sponsors, I should like to express the hope that in the light of these changes it will indeed be possible to adopt the revised draft resolution today without a vote.

Before concluding, I should like to express our gratitude to all the delegations that have contributed constructively and with a great deal of flexibility to the drafting of this revised text.

The President (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the representative of Ecuador to introduce the amendments contained in document A/49/L.13.

Mr. Ponce (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/49/357 and Add.1 graphically describes the tragic effects of the existence of 110 million mines in various parts of the planet on millions of people and on the economy of many countries, whose basic rights, including the right of development, are thereby restricted. The elimination of this problem will require, in addition to the actions to be taken in the area of disarmament and arms control, an expenditure of between $300 and $1,000 per mine — in other words, the international community will have to allocate between $33 billion and $110 billion to the task of mine clearance.

The delegation of Ecuador believes it would be absolutely impossible to obtain a sum equivalent to between 6 and 20 times the annual budget of the United Nations through voluntary contributions alone. We should remember that after the industrialized countries failed to fulfil the target figure of 1 per cent of their gross national product for cooperation for development, it was reduced to 0.7 per cent — and even that target has been met by only four States. Official development aid decreased by $6 billion between 1992 and 1993, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been forced to reduce its programmes by 30 per cent. The defects of the voluntary-contributions mechanism have once again become clear in the failure to attain the very modest goals set at the Rio Summit — indeed they now seem unattainable. Furthermore, the Global Environmental Facility Fund has not received even a third of the money it requires. Therefore, it seems impossible that the agreement set forth in Agenda 21 to allocate $129 billion annually for sustainable development will ever be implemented.

My country feels, however, that all States do not have an equal responsibility for solving the problem. Ecuador is one of the few States that have carried out their obligations under the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and its Protocols, which clearly set forth the responsibility of the States that lay the mines. We thus support the extension, strengthening and universal application of this Convention.

From a strictly economic point of view — on which we must focus in creating a trust fund to finance international-cooperation activities for mine clearance — we must point out that the export of land mines has generated huge profits in past decades. In the near future, many of the firms that have made these profits will even increase them because they will gain the technology and human resources needed for mine clearance. That is why my Government believes that the fund should be financed mainly from the resources of the mine exporters, whose moral responsibility should be made clear by the Assembly.

Document A/49/L.13, submitted by my delegation, contains amendments to draft resolution A/49/L.8 that are designed to establish the responsibility of the mine-exporting States for the financing of the trust fund.

Ecuador's proposal was inspired by the statements made by the delegations of the Andean countries — Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela and my own country, Ecuador — regarding the opinion transmitted to the Secretariat on resolution 48/7; that opinion is contained on page 10 of document A/49/357/Add.1. Three months ago we initiated contacts with the sponsors of draft resolution A/49/L.8 in order to achieve a single text. During those contacts my delegation showed the greatest flexibility. Unfortunately, the resistance of some delegations to recognizing the special responsibility of the mine-exporting States and to referring to them in the draft resolution as being among the possible contributors to the trust fund made it impossible to achieve the consensus on the establishment of the appropriate mechanisms that Ecuador would have wished to see achieved in order to solve this serious humanitarian problem.

A conference of possible donors to the fund is being organized for June 1995. In order to obtain the maximum contributions — and no one can allege that the introduction of political criteria in the draft resolution we are going to adopt today could affect the results — the Government of Ecuador has decided not to ask for a vote on document A/49/L.13. We shall wait to hear the pledges of contributions that States, especially the mine-exporting States, will make at the conference. If they are not commensurate with the dimension of the problem, my delegation will continue to work with other members of the Assembly to find mechanisms that will make possible the adequate financing of mine-clearance activities without affecting the funds allocated for the promotion of development.

In conclusion, my Government thanks the many delegations — both from the developing and from the industrialized countries — that have expressed their support for the ideas contained in document A/49/L.13, including their offer to co-sponsor the amendments. We commit ourselves to continuing to cooperate with them in the quest for the best way to achieve the effective implementation of those ideas.

Mr. Martínez Blanco (Honduras) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: With reference to draft resolution A/49/L.8/Rev.1 on agenda item 22, entitled "Assistance in mine clearance", I wish to congratulate the Secretary-General on his excellent, well-conceived report in document A/49/357, submitted in accordance with resolution A/48/7, adopted by the Assembly on 19 October 1993.

The problem of uncleared land mines has become increasingly serious. Indeed, there are now between 85 million and 110 million mines spread in more than 60 countries. These mines cause an average of 400 deaths a month, overburdening the hospitals and medical services of the countries where the mines have been laid. In addition, they prevent the cultivation of arable land and impede the economic and social recovery of the rural areas of those countries.

According to available information, the estimated cost of the removal of these mines is approximately $33 billion — and this does not include the cost of the medical treatment of survivors.

In Honduras, there are at present more than 150,000 anti-personnel land-mines, which have been laid over the past decade and which remain active because of their longevity. They are a constant reminder of the wars and political conflicts that have beset our region.

We are therefore grateful for the work the Secretary-General has done in connection with the establishment of a fund for assistance in mine clearance, which has been open for contributions since 30 November 1994. We also express our gratitude to the Organization of American States for its efforts to ensure mine clearance in the Central American region.

My delegation supports the various statements by the Secretary-General on the declaration of a moratorium on the production and sale of anti-personnel mines. In this regard I should like to quote the following from his report entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations":

> "Member States must agree on effective measures to stop the production and use of land mines ..." *(A/49/177, para. 49)*

In his report "An agenda for development: recommendations," the Secretary-General stated:

> "More extensive comparative analysis of military and social budgets must be undertaken. Land-mines are a major obstacle to development, shattering lives

and removing land from productive use. An outright worldwide ban on the production and transfer of land-mines and their components should be declared." *(A/49/665, para. 33)*

After thoroughly studying the problem of anti-personnel land-mines and reading the documents prepared by the Secretary-General as well as the various reports he has submitted on this question, we must ask ourselves whether the will truly exists on the part of some countries to take the serious humanitarian measures necessary to solve this problem. That is why we were disturbed to hear the statement of one delegation in the plenary Assembly on agenda item 92, in which he compared a machete, a farmer's tool, to a land-mine, a tool of war and destruction.

Therefore, as we have informed the President of the Assembly, the sponsors are withdrawing the amendment contained in document A/49/L.11 in order to maintain consensus on draft resolution A/49/L.8/Rev.1. We do so because the content of the ninth and tenth preambular paragraphs is now acceptable to our delegation.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I call on the representative of Afghanistan, who wishes to make a statement.

Mr. Farhadi (Afghanistan): Before the General Assembly takes action on draft resolution A/49/L.8/Rev.1, I should like briefly to explain why my delegation has agreed to withdraw the amendments contained in document A/49/L.12, dated 25 October 1994.

The negotiations on the draft resolution — the first version of which was submitted on 20 October — took more than two and a half months. There were many pre-drafts.

On 13 October 1994 my delegation communicated its views to the delegation of Germany and expressed the hope that its Permanent Mission and those of the other members of the European Union — to which my delegation is very grateful for its submission of the original draft resolution — could adopt the Afghan amendments to one of the pre-drafts. These amendments came from Afghanistan, the country most affected by land-mines laid during a war of aggression, one of the most significant that occurred during the so-called cold-war.

Our delegation is now able to withdraw the amendments in document A/49/L.12 because, in summary, they are incorporated in the new version of the draft resolution in document A/49/L.8/Rev.1, on which the Assembly will take action today. This is also why my delegation has become a co-sponsor of the revised version of the draft resolution.

Before the General Assembly takes action on this revised draft, I should like to place it on record that many nations such as mine are deeply concerned at the fact that, with the progress of technology, mines and other explosive devices are becoming increasingly non-detectable or difficult to detect, and that a number of mines are equipped with anti-handling devices. We are grateful to the delegation of Japan for its firm support of this concern advanced by our delegation, which is reflected in operative paragraph 10 of the revised draft resolution.

It must also be recognized that, as experience shows, the most cost-effective clearance teams are those composed of civilian mine- clearance workers recruited locally and trained by experts, with international assistance.

Regarding operative paragraphs 7 and 8 of the revised draft resolution, my delegation and many others expect the Secretary-General to enhance the role of the existing Mine Clearance and Policy Unit, under the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, in order, *inter alia*, to study on a continuous basis the problem of land-mines and mine-clearance in war-stricken countries; to serve as a coordinating body for all activities on the national, subregional and international levels and those to be performed by non-governmental organizations in the fields of mine-awareness, training, surveying, mine clearance and scientific research for mine-clearance technology; to initiate, where required, tripartite agreements between the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, non-governmental organizations and Governments concerned, thus ensuring successful mine clearance, awareness of the problem, and training projects and programmes; to coordinate and promote the activities of the governmental and non-governmental organizations that are assisting the developing war-stricken countries in providing prostheses for the victims — adults and children — of land mines and booby-traps; and to facilitate contacts and promote the conclusion of agreements between the affected countries and the donor Governments and non-governmental organizations in the field of mine clearance.

Concerning operative paragraph 9, it is well known that all States that have spread land-mines in other countries must provide maps of the mine-fields, in accordance with the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 and its additional Protocols.

Regarding operative paragraph 11, on the convening of an international meeting on mine clearance, my delegation would like to state that the meeting of experts could also draft an international strategy for mine clearance as well as ways and means of alleviating the disastrous consequences of land-mines in war-stricken countries. With regard to the meeting of potential donors, my delegation is grateful to the delegation of the United States of America for proposing the idea at the beginning of the discussion of the draft resolution. We are sure that not only Governments but potential donors and non-governmental organizations will be invited to the meeting, which we hope will take place in 1995.

As members will have noticed, I have just made a procedural but also a very substantive statement. We join the delegation of Germany in hoping that the revised draft resolution will be adopted by consensus, without a vote.

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly has heard the statement of the representative of Ecuador in which he informed the Assembly that he will not press his proposal to a vote. The Assembly has also heard the statements of the representatives of Honduras and Afghanistan in which they withdrew their respective amendments to draft resolution A/49/L.8/Rev.1.

Therefore, the Assembly has before it for action only draft resolution A/49/L.8/Rev.1. We shall now proceed to consider that draft resolution.

The following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania and Guinea-Bissau.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/49/L.8/Rev.1.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/49/L.8/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 49/215).

The President (*interpretation from French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 22?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 17 ***(continued)***

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(j) Appointment of members of the Joint Inspection Unit: note by the President of the General Assembly (A/49/806)

The President (*interpretation from French*): As is indicated in document A/49/806, in accordance with the procedures described in article 3, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, having consulted the regional groups concerned, and on the basis of a candidature submitted by the Eastern European States as well as through a consultation by secret ballot with the General Assembly, I requested the delegations of Burkina Faso, Germany, Poland and the United States of America to propose candidates.

As is further indicated in document A/49/806, as a result of consultations in accordance with article 3, paragraph 2, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, including consultations with the President of the Economic and Social Council and with the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, I now submit to the Assembly the candidatures of Mr. Andrzej Abraszewski of Poland, Mr. John D. Fox of the United States of America, Mr. Wolfgang M. Münch of Germany, and Mr. Ali Badara Tall of Burkina Faso for appointment as members of the Joint Inspection Unit for a term of office commencing on 1 January 1996 and expiring on 31 December 2000.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to appoint those candidates?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of sub-item (j) of agenda item 17.

Introduction of reports of the Fifth Committee

The President (*interpretation from French*): The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 104, 105, 107, 108,

110 to 117, 119, 122 to 126, 128, 129, 132, 146, 155 and 12.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee to introduce the reports of the Fifth Committee in one intervention.

Mr. Djacta (Algeria), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour today to introduce the reports of the Fifth Committee on the items on its agenda.

Members will recall that 33 items were allocated to the Fifth Committee for the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

From 23 September to 22 December, the Fifth Committee held 38 formal meetings. All the negotiations on the various items inscribed on its agenda took place in informal meetings. I am happy to inform the Assembly that all the draft resolutions and draft decisions adopted during this first part of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly were adopted by consensus.

I shall now present a brief report on the work of the Fifth Committee.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 104, "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors", is contained in document A/49/804. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 105, "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", is contained in document A/49/820. In paragraph 13 of that report the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, concerning the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 1996-1997. In paragraph 14 of the report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of three draft decisions. Draft decision I concerns the deferment to the resumed forty-ninth session of consideration of agenda item 105. It was submitted orally by the Chairman of the Committee. Draft decision II concerns documents relating to the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations. Draft decision III concerns the Fifth Committee's biennial programme of work for 1995-1996. The draft resolution and the three draft decisions were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 155, "Programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991" is contained in document A/49/807. In paragraph 5 of that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 107, "Programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995", is contained in document A/49/822. In that report the Committee recommends the adoption of the two draft resolutions contained in paragraph 27 of document A/C.5/49/L.32. The Fifth Committee adopted those draft resolutions without a vote.

On agenda item 108, "Programme planning", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/49/819. In paragraph 7 of that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision presented orally by the Chairman of the Committee, by which the General Assembly would decide to defer to its resumed forty-ninth session consideration of agenda item 108. The draft decision was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 110, "Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency", is contained in document A/49/779. In paragraph 5 of the report the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision by which the Assembly would take note of the statistical report by the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the budgetary and financial situation of organizations of the United Nations system. This draft decision, proposed orally, was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 111, "Pattern of conferences", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/49/805. In paragraph 7 of that report the Committee recommends the adoption of one draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 112, "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", is contained in document A/49/673/Add.1. In paragraph 6 of that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the

adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 113, "Human resources management", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/49/802. In paragraph 6 of that report the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 114, "United Nations common system", is contained in document A/49/772. In paragraph 9 of that report, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 115, "United Nations pension system", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/49/773. In paragraph 7 of that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 116 (a), "Financing of the United Nations peace-keeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Disengagement Observer Force", is contained in document A/49/755/Add.1. In paragraph 5 of that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 116 (b), "Financing of the United Nations peace-keeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", the report of the Fifth Committee on this item is contained in document A/49/811. In paragraph 6 of that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which it adopted without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 117, "Financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/49/816. In paragraph 6 of the report the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 119, "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara", is contained in document A/49/808. In paragraph 6 of that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft decision, which it adopted without a vote.

On agenda item 122, "Financing of the United Nations Protection Force", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/49/756/Add.1. In paragraph 6 of that report the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 123, "Financing of the United Nations Operation in Somalia II", is contained in document A/49/757/Add.1. In paragraph 5 of the report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which it adopted without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 124, "Financing of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/49/817. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision, which it adopted without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 125, "Financing of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus", is contained in document A/49/809. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 126, "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/49/798. In paragraph 6 of that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which it adopted without a vote.

Regarding agenda item 128, "Financing of the United Nations Mission in Haiti", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/49/818. In paragraph 6 of that report the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft decision, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 129, "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia", is contained in document A/49/812. In paragraph 6 of that report the Committee recommends to

the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which it adopted without a vote.

On agenda item 132 (a), "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations: Financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in documents A/49/803 and A/49/803/Add.1. In paragraph 6 of part II of the report (A/49/803/Add.1), the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote. In paragraph 5 of document A/49/803, the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision, also adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 132 (b), "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations: Relocation of Belarus and Ukraine to the group of Member States set out in paragraph 3 (c) of General Assembly resolution 43/322", is contained in document A/49/821. In paragraph 7 of that report the Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft decision, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Regarding agenda item 146, "Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/49/810. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Fifth Committee recommends that the General Assembly adopt a draft decision, presented by the representative of Austria, by which the General Assembly would decide to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in the additional amount of $7 million to allow the International Tribunal to continue its activities until 31 March 1995, without prejudice to any decisions that the General Assembly might take with regard to budgetary and administrative matters and to the mode of financing, and to resume consideration of the item before 28 February 1995. This draft decision was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to thank very sincerely Mr. Joseph Acakpo-Satchivi, the esteemed Secretary of the Fifth Committee, and the members of the Secretariat for their support during our deliberations.

The President (*interpretation from French*): If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from French*): Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we shall to take decisions in the same manner as in the Fifth Committee.

Agenda item 104

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/804)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/216).

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 104.

Agenda item 105

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/820)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 13 of its report and on the three draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 14.

We turn first to the draft resolution contained in paragraph 13 of document A/49/820.

The draft resolution is entitled "Proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 1996-1997".

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/217).

The President (*interpretation from French*): We turn now to the three draft decisions recommended for adoption by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 14 of document A/49/820.

We turn first to draft decision I entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision I?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President (*interpretation from French*): Next, we turn to draft decision II, entitled "Documents relating to the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations".

Draft decision II was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President (*interpretation from French*): Draft decision III is entitled "Biennial programme of work for the Fifth Committee for 1995-1996".

Draft decision III was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision III was adopted.

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 105.

Agenda item 155

Programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/807)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report.

The draft resolution is entitled "Final appropriation for the biennium 1990-1991" and was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/218).

The President (*interpretation from French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 155?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 107

Programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/822)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee. The

recommendations of the Fifth Committee are for the time being contained in section IV, paragraph 27, of document A/C.5/49/L.32.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995". As stated in the report, section IV of the draft resolution should be replaced by the text contained in document A/49/822.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 49/219).

The President (*interpretation from French*): Draft resolution II, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 49/220).

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 107.

Agenda item 108

Programme planning: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/819)

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 108.

Agenda item 110

Administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations with specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/779)

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt this draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President *(interpretation from French):* May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 110?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 111

Pattern of conferences: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/805)

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/221).

The President *(interpretation from French):* May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 111?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 112 ***(continued)***

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Fifth Committee (Part II) (A/49/673/Add.1)

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of part II of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/19 B).

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position.

Mr. Sychou (Belarus) *(interpretation from Russian)*: The Assembly has just adopted a very important resolution which determines the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations for 1995 to 1997.

We joined the consensus on this resolution for the following reasons.

Whenever the matter of the financial functioning of the United Nations has been considered, the delegation of Belarus has always pointed out the close link between the problems related to the establishment of the scale of assessment for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations and the financial crisis of the Organization. This session has quite convincingly shown once again that the problem of overcoming the financial crisis is still relevant — indeed, even more relevant.

In this connection we would like to emphasize that, although we joined the consensus on the resolution on the scale of assessments for the period 1995 to 1997, we are none the less deeply dissatisfied with the proposed scheme for the apportionment of the level of contributions of States Members of the United Nations. We feel our attitude is justified because our scale of assessment is still high and it is not in keeping with our real capacity to pay.

The means used by the Committee on Contributions and by the Fifth Committee to establish the scale of assessment of Belarus for the regular budget as long ago as 1992 practically speaking increased our assessment one and a half times and set a dangerous precedent that undermines the spirit of consensus that has been established with regard to the adoption of decisions on administrative and budgetary questions within the Organization. During the period that has just ended, we have constantly tried to rectify the present situation, in which one of the original founders of the United Nations is in fact facing the danger of the revocation of its right to vote in the Assembly because we do not have the financial means to deal with our rapidly increasing regular-budget indebtedness or to make our contribution to the financing of peace-keeping operations.

According to Secretariat data, Belarus was one of the seven debtor countries *vis-à-vis* the regular budget and one of the nine debtor countries *vis-à-vis* the financing of peace-keeping operations.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to achieve any real results during this session. At its fifty-fourth session, although it had every opportunity to do so, the Committee on Contributions did not carry out the mandate in paragraph 3 of resolution 48/223 B, which covers the specific circumstances which are applicable to the Republic of Belarus. Moreover, the Committee on Contributions has proposed a three-step method for reducing by one and one half times the impact of the scheme of limits in establishing the scale of assessments for 1995 to 1997. That proposal, in our view, contradicts rule 160 of the General Assembly's rules of procedure and violates the spirit of resolution 48/223 B.

The ambiguity of the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions caused serious difficulties in the discussion of the scale of assessments in the Fifth Committee and, to a certain extent, predetermined the results of the work on this agenda item. That is hardly a satisfactory situation from our point of view.

Unfortunately, the process of establishing a scale of assessments for the forthcoming period has once again convincingly demonstrated the conservative approach and the narrow interests that still prevail over common sense in the efforts to solve the financial problems of the United Nations. In these conditions, it is becoming ever more apparent that the system of assessing the contributions of Member States should be improved by eliminating distortions in the various elements of the system and making sure that the principle of each State's capacity to pay is applied in all cases. In this connection, we are placing special hopes in the activities of the open-ended working group which, under the guidance of the President of the General Assembly, has been asked to consider a package of questions related to the establishment of a just system of apportioning the expenses of the United Nations. At the same time, we would like to emphasize that we trust that the real problem of determining my country's scale of assessment in accordance with its capacity to pay will be solved before the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

Finally, the image of consensus that we have now is fragile and must be carefully nurtured. It should reflect the real balance of opinions and the general agreement as well as the interests of all States without exception. We should not be merely chasing a mirage.

Mr. Al-Amri (Oman) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation already spoke on this matter during the general debate on the report of the Committee on Contributions. At that time, we expressed my country's position on the Committee's recommendation that our scale of assessment should be raised. Because we truly wish to adhere to the principle of consensus in the adoption of the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions, my delegation joined the consensus for the adoption of the draft resolution, contained in paragraph 6 of document A/49/673/Add.1.

The fundamental principle for determining the scale of Member States' assessments is their capacity to pay. We would like to emphasize that our scale of assessment is not in keeping with this principle. Furthermore, during the discussion of the various criteria for determining the scale of assessments, the Committee on Contributions did not take many important factors into account.

At this time, most developing countries including my own, are suffering from economic problems that affect them adversely in various ways. We raise this matter because we genuinely desire to pay our contribution in time and in full. I do not wish to dwell now on the economic and financial obstacles and difficulties we are facing at this stage. My delegation only hopes that the Committee on Contributions will take these concerns into consideration, in keeping with operative paragraph 4 of the resolution that has now been adopted.

Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine): Ukraine attaches great importance to the agenda item that is now under consideration by the General Assembly.

Two years have passed since the General Assembly voted on and adopted decision 47/456, which is now well known. As a result, the rate of assessment for Ukraine was, in one fell swoop and in an unprecedented manner, increased by more than 50 per cent. Ukraine thus became one of the Member States most affected by the unfair apportionment of the assessment of the former USSR for the regular budget of the Organization.

In recent years, my country has been exerting untiring efforts in the United Nations to make our determined rate of assessment correspond to our capacity to pay. In accordance with rule 160 of the General Assembly's rules of procedure, the Government of Ukraine has twice appealed to the Committee on Contributions to determine an assessment rate that would reflect Ukraine's capacity to pay.

We must state however, with regret, that the Committee appears to have been unable to settle this problem or to improve the mechanism for the apportionment of expenses of the Organization in general. The three-step scale of assessments for the years 1995 to 1997 that has just been adopted by the General Assembly will not be simple, transparent or fair. Due to the imperfect methodology used in its determination — one that does not reflect current realities — the rates of assessment of many Member States continue to exceed tremendously their capacity to pay.

Ukraine has agreed to adopt this scale without a vote not because it is satisfied with its content but with the aim of restoring the spirit of consensus in questions of the financing of the United Nations.

We are firmly convinced that the components of the scheme of limits, which have become obsolete and unrealistic, should be promptly excluded from the scale methodology in order to apportion the expenses of the Organization on an economically sound basis.

The Committee on Contributions should in future work towards accelerating the adjustment of the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations to Member States' capacity to pay. This not only would serve the interests of a large group of Member States and create opportunities to solve the problem of Ukraine's excessive rate of assessment, but also would serve the interests of the Organization as a whole inasmuch as it would lead to the quickest improvement of its financial situation.

We expect that the deliberations of the high-level open-ended working group under the chairmanship of the President of the General Assembly, as well as of the ad hoc intergovernmental working group of experts established under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 49/19 A, will have a positive impact in the financial sphere. But a real improvement in the mechanism of the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations can be achieved only if those Member States with a high economic potential demonstrate

political will and pay their contributions to this Organization in accordance with their capacity to pay.

Mr. Baumanis (Latvia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of Estonia, Lithuania and my own country, Latvia.

I wish to express our deep gratitude to the Chairman of the informal consultations on agenda item 112, Ambassador Maycock of Barbados, for his leadership, patience and fortitude, and to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Teirlinck of Belgium. Their joint efforts have led to a consensus decision on this agenda item.

Exactly a year ago, the Baltic States addressed the General Assembly and stated their expectation that resolution 48/223 B would lead to new assessment rates for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania under the next scale in accordance with their capacity to pay, thus ending the overassessment of the Baltic States under the current scale. It may be recalled that the General Assembly tried but failed, both in 1991 and 1992, to decide on a capacity-to-pay rate for the Baltic States.

The fulfilment of this expectation of the Baltic States has once again been deferred to a future scale. The Baltic States joined in the adoption without a vote of the draft resolution contained in document A/49/673/Add.1 — but with serious reservations, because the next scale prolongs the transition to a scale based on capacity to pay for the Baltic States and for the other States among the 22 Member States that were first identified by the Committee on Contributions in its 1993 report.

In its 1994 report, in column 6 of annexes II A and III B, the Committee succeeded in defining, for the first time, capacity-to-pay assessment rates for all Member States on the basis of national account data and the best available approximations of market exchange rates. The scheme of limits permits the next scale to move, step by step, more than half way towards these rates by the year 1997. In that year most of the 22 Member States will still have assessment rates at least 100 per cent higher than their capacity-to-pay rates. Completion of the transition to capacity-to-pay assessment rates is a task that remains to be accomplished immediately after 1997.

Therefore, the principle of sovereign equality, which means that all Member States have equal rights and obligations, including financial ones, and which is enshrined in paragraph 1 of Article 2 of the Charter, continues to be violated because the application in 1992 of the ad hoc assessment methodology to the 22 Member States, in place of the standard methodology used for all other States, continues to increase the assessment rates of the 22 States through the constraints imposed by the scheme of limits.

The principle of sovereign equality continues to be violated for two additional reasons. First, the excessive assessment rates for the current scale period, determined through the ad hoc method that discriminated against the 22 Member States, remain unchanged. Secondly, the current assessment rates for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are derived from the assessment rates of the former USSR, and their advance to the Working Capital Fund is paid out of the advance of the former USSR.

To sum up, the Baltic States have been forced to accept a financial obligation and an asset of the former USSR. The position of the Baltic States is that they are not successors to the former Soviet Union. The principle of sovereign equality requires respect from other States for this position of principle held by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The Baltic States reserve the right to take action concerning assessment rates and advances to the Working Capital Fund in order to achieve compliance with the principle of sovereign equality.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania believe that the excessive assessment rates for the 22 Member States were partly the result of the present procedure and methodology for determining scales of assessment. The Baltic delegations support reform of both the procedure and the methodology for determining scales of assessment and are ready to participate in such an endeavour, including active participation in the open-ended working group that the General Assembly established today.

In this connection, the Baltic States wish to bring to the attention of the Member States one aspect of the payment of contributions in full and on time: the close connection between inequitable assessments and the financial difficulties of the United Nations. A large share of the inequitable assessments results from the application of the scheme of limits, which over assesses Member States if their wealth has been exaggerated in the past or if their economies have grown at a rate that falls below the world average. Such overassessment of States, especially if they are newly independent States with emerging financial institutions, leads directly to an increase in outstanding contributions, because the Governments of these States control extremely limited

financial resources and have to respond to an exceptionally large number of financial needs.

Predictably, at the end of November, the group of over 30 Member States with assessment rates that suffer distortion due to the application of the scheme of limits was responsible for nearly 50 per cent of the outstanding contributions to the United Nations. This group had outstanding contributions that were over 10 times greater, per an assessment rate of 1 per cent, than the group of over 20, mostly rich, States with rapidly growing economies, which benefit from the scheme of limits. The decision on the new scale that the General Assembly has adopted exploits only partially the potential that an equitable assessment methodology possesses for improving the financial situation of the United Nations.

Ms. Arystanbekova (Kazakhstan): The delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan was an active participant in the informal consultations on the scale of assessments for the years 1995 to 1997. We must admit that the negotiations on this subject this year again turned out to be a very lengthy exercise. Many ideas were floated and many positions were taken. Eventually, a consensus decision more of a political than of a technical nature was reached. My delegation joined the consensus out of a spirit of cooperation and flexibility, although the decision taken cannot fully satisfy my Government.

My delegation's position on the scale of assessments and its methodology has been made known on many occasions. We firmly believe that there is plenty of room for further improvement of the scale methodology, in particular through the complete elimination of all of its highly distorting elements, in order to achieve a transparent, equitable and non-discriminatory scale of assessments. My delegation attaches great importance to this because it believes the credibility of the scale and its methodology to be a crucial factor for the sound financial standing of the United Nations. My delegation will therefore continue to take an active part in the work of the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly on this question and looks forward to the outcome of the work of the ad hoc group of experts to study the principle of capacity to pay, and the concurrent report of the Committee on Contributions.

In conclusion, my delegation extends its most sincere thanks to Ambassador Maycock of Barbados, who coordinated the informal consultations on the scale of assessments in a most expert and exemplary manner, thus contributing to the final decision that was just taken by consensus. We should also like to thank the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Teirlinck, and all the delegations that participated in these important negotiations.

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 112.

Agenda item 113

Human resources management: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/802)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/222).

The President (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in explanation of position.

Mr. Shaheed (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I wish to reiterate my delegation's position on the Conventions on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies.

My delegation is in favour of the provision of all possible assistance to United Nations staff by the terms of those Conventions. My delegation considers that the Conventions cover all those working for the United Nations in the field in Syria. Like every other country that grants such immunities, my country expects these international civil servants to comply with the provisions of the Conventions in terms of respecting the norms and laws of the host country. Such staff members must not engage in any activity incompatible with the nature of their work.

My country supports these immunities so long as they do not constitute intervention in the domestic affairs of States.

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 113.

Agenda item 114

United Nations common system: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/772)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report. It is entitled "United Nations common system: report of the International Civil Service Commission".

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/223).

The President (*interpretation from French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 114?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 115

United Nations pension system: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/773)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/224).

The President (*interpretation from French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 115?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 116 ***(continued)***

Financing of the United Nations peace-keeping forces in the Middle East

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force: report of the Fifth Committee (part II) (A/49/755/Add.1)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/811)

The President (*interpretation from French*): We turn first to part II of the report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/755/Add.1), on sub-item (a) of agenda item 116, which relates to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force.

The Assembly will take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of that report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/225).

The President (*interpretation from French*): We turn next to the report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/811) sub-item (b) of agenda item 116, which relates to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

The General Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of that report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/226).

The President (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in explanation of position.

Mr. Shaheed (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation wishes to explain its position on the draft resolutions recommended in documents

A/49/755/Add.1 and A/49/811, relating respectively to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

Had these draft resolutions been put to the vote, my delegation would have voted against them, in accordance with our position of principle, as stated at previous sessions of the General Assembly, that the cost of financing these forces should be borne by the aggressor country, whose aggressive practices made it necessary to establish the two forces.

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 116.

Agenda item 117

Financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/816)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/227).

The President (interpretation from French): I now call on the representative of Angola, who wished to make a statement.

Mr. Teixeira Fortes (Angola) *(interpretation from Spanish):* On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Angola, I should like to congratulate all the members of the Fifth Committee on the adoption by consensus of the draft resolution that has now become resolution 49/227. We are particularly grateful to all the countries which, in one way or another, have contributed positively and in various ways to the efforts to bring about peace in my country.

We are aware of the very important role which the United Nations has played in the past and continues to play in the effective implementation of the Lusaka, Zambia, agreements. The proof of this is that my Government has made available to the future United Nations Verification Mission in Angola (UNAVEM III) $64.7 million for the following purposes: $15.5 million for housing, warehouses at seaports and airports, fuel, parking facilities, and offices; and $49.2 million for various Government service facilities, such as those related to immigration operations, customs duties and so forth.

My Government will make available to UNAVEM III a total of $374 million, which is equivalent to almost 30 per cent of the entire figure for assistance from the international community.

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 117.

Agenda item 119

Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/808)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The draft decision was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 119.

Agenda item 122 *(continued)*

Financing of the United Nations Protection Force: report of the Fifth Committee (Part II) (A/49/756/Add.1)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of part II its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/228).

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 122.

Agenda item 123 ***(continued)***

Financing of the United Nations Operation in Somalia II: report of the Fifth Committee (Part II) (A/49/757/Add.1)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of part II of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/229).

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 123.

Agenda item 124

Financing of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/817)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The draft decision was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 124.

Agenda item 125

Financing of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/809)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/230).

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 125.

Agenda item 126

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/798)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/231).

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 126.

Agenda item 128

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Haiti: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/818)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

The draft decision was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 128.

Agenda item 129

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/812)

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly also wishes to do so?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/232).

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 129.

Agenda item 132

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations

(a) Financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations: report of the Fifth Committee (Parts I and II) (A/49/803 and Add.l)

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will first take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of part I of its report (A/49/803).

The draft decision is entitled "Support account for peace-keeping operations" and was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly also wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of part II of its report (A/49/803/Add.1).

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/233).

(b) Relocation of Belarus and Ukraine to the group of Member States set out in paragraph 3 (c) of General Assembly resolution 43/232: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/821)

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The draft decision was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their positions.

Mr. Orange (Belarus) *(interpretation from Russian):* We are firmly convinced that the adoption of the decision in the Fifth Committee's report in document A/49/821, reflects the spirit of cooperation and understanding shown by Member States in evaluating the full complexity of the situation of the Republic of Belarus, which is still in group B of the scale of assessments for financing peace-keeping operations.

At the same time, while recognizing the great importance of this resolution to Belarus, we must stress that we consider it only a partial solution to the serious financial problem set forth in the relevant agenda item of the forty-ninth session.

We must unfortunately note that this question has dragged on because the Organization has not been able to eliminate the factors which have made it impossible for the Republic of Belarus, because of its economic situation, to meet its financial obligations with respect to United Nations peace-keeping operations.

We feel that there is only one way out of this situation — namely, to solve this long-standing, urgent problem immediately. In this regard we would like to

express the hope that a just and complete solution to the question will make it possible to remove this item from the General Assembly's agenda in 1995.

Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine): The decision that has just been taken by the General Assembly is of great significance for my country. Our delegation is grateful to all the Member States that have taken into account our difficulties regarding the payment of contributions to peace-keeping operations.

The discussion of this matter yesterday in the Fifth Committee clearly demonstrated that Member States are interested in finding a prompt and fair solution to the problem of the relocation of Ukraine to the group described in paragraph 3 (c) of resolution 43/232, regarding the scheme for the apportionment of expenses for peace-keeping operations, and the subsequent resolution of its indebtedness.

We consider the present decision a transitional step and hope that at its resumed forty-ninth session the General Assembly will find the modalities to settle this problem finally. The delegation of Ukraine is ready to do its best to this end.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 132.

Agenda item 146

Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/810)

The President: *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The draft decision was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 146.

Agenda item 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council: report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/670)

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will now consider the report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 12, dealing with those chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council which were allocated to the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 4 of its report.

May I take it that the Assembly adopts the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of those chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council which were allocated to the Fifth Committee?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 89 ***(continued)***

Environment and sustainable development

(d) Elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa

Report of the Second Committee (Part V) (A/49/729/Add.4)

Letter from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences (A/49/784)

The President *(interpretation from French)*: Members will recall that at its 92nd plenary meeting, on 19 December 1994, the Assembly was informed that agenda item 89 (d) would be considered at a later date, in order to allow for the review of the programme budget

implications of the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of part V of its report.

The Fifth Committee has now considered the programme budget implications of this draft resolution, in the context of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, under agenda item 107, which the Assembly considered earlier this afternoon.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of part V of its report.

With regard to this draft resolution, may I take it that the General Assembly agrees with the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences contained in document A/49/784?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from French*): The draft resolution contained in paragraph 8 of part V of the report was adopted by the Second Committee without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 49/234).

The President (*interpretation from French*): I should like to inform the Assembly that the relevant provisions of the resolution just adopted will be incorporated in the biennial programme of work of the Second Committee adopted by the General Assembly at its 92nd plenary meeting, on 19 December 1994.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 89?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Second Committee.

Agenda item 12 ***(continued)***

Report of the Economic and Social Council: chapters considered directly in plenary meeting (chapters I, II, III (section C), V (section A), VI (section K), XVI and XVII (A/49/3)

The President (*interpretation from French*): Members will recall that chapters I, II, III (section C), V (section A), VI (section K), XVI and XVII of the report of the Economic and Social Council were assigned to plenary meetings.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of those chapters of the report?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of chapters I, II, III (section C), V (section A), VI (section K), XVI and XVII of the report of the Economic and Social Council?

It was so decided.

The President (*interpretation from French*): We have thus concluded our consideration of all the chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council.

Programme of work

The President (*interpretation from French*): Apart from organizational matters and items that may have to be considered by operation of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, and bearing in mind the action already taken by the Assembly at its 31st, 47th, 49th, 51st, 55th, 56th, 70th, 75th, 82nd, 83rd, 88th, 92nd, 94th and 95th plenary meetings, concerning agenda items 10, 11, 16(a), 17(g), 17(i), 34, 39, 40, 42 to 44, 77, 79, 92, 100(d), 104, 105, 107, 108, 112, 113, 116, 117, 119, 120, 122 to 130, 132 and 146, I should like to propose that the following agenda items be retained for consideration during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly:

Item 10	Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization
Item 11	Report of the Security Council
Item 15(c)	Election of a member of the International Court of Justice
Item 16(a)	Election of twelve members of the World Food Council
Item 17(g)	Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee

Item 17(i)	Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences
Item 33	Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters
Item 34	The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti
Item 39	The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Item 40	Question of Palestine
Item 42	The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development
Item 43	Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields
Item 44	Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995
Item 47	Armed Israeli aggression against the Iraqi nuclear installations and its grave consequences for the established international system concerning the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and international peace and security
Item 48	Launching of global negotiations on international economic cooperation for development
Item 49	Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations
Item 50	The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security
Item 51	Question of Cyprus
Item 52	Consequences of the Iraqi occupation of and aggression against Kuwait
Item 77	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
Item 79	Comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects
Item 92	Agenda for development
Item 100(d)	Comprehensive implementation and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action
Item 104	Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors
Item 105	Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations
Item 106	Programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993
Item 107	Programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995
Item 108	Programme planning
Item 109	Improving the financial situation of the United Nations
Item 112	Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations
Item 113	Human resources management
Item 116	Financing of the United Nations peace-keeping forces in the Middle East
Item 117	Financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission
Item 118	Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991)
Item 119	Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
Item 120	Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador

Item 121	Financing and liquidation of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
Item 122	Financing of the United Nations Protection Force
Item 123	Financing of the United Nations Operation in Somalia II
Item 124	Financing of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique
Item 125	Financing of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus
Item 126	Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
Item 127	Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda
Item 128	Financing of the United Nations Mission in Haiti
Item 129	Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia
Item 130	Financing of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda
Item 131	Financing of the United Nations Military Liaison Team in Cambodia
Item 132	Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations
Item 146	Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991
Item 162	Financing of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that those agenda items be retained for consideration during the forty-ninth session of the Assembly?

It was so decided.

Statement by the President

The President (*interpretation from French*): The time has come to suspend this session of the General Assembly, on the eve of a historic year that will be marked by the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization. At this stage in our work, it would be premature to make any assessment, even a provisional one, of what we have done. I will therefore confine myself to making a few comments, drawn in particular from my analysis of the work done in the Main Committees and of the general debate in the plenary Assembly, whose rich and stimulating content is certainly the clearest illustration of our commitment to, and even of our faith in, the United Nations and the ideals enshrined in its Charter.

I also take this opportunity to welcome the admission to membership in the United Nations at this session of the Republic of Palau, as the 185th Member State. This has brought to an end the application to the Pacific Island Territories of the Trusteeship System, established by the United Nations at the end of the Second World War. The admission of Palau assuredly strengthens the universality of the United Nations.

The current session has also been marked by the entry into force on 16 November 1994 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Agreement of 28 July 1994 relating to the implementation of Part XI of that Convention, which has come into effect provisionally.

Similarly, we would recall the adoption during this session of two Declarations and a Convention with paramount legal and political significance. The first of these instruments is the Declaration on the Enhancement of Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Arrangements or Agencies in the Maintenance of International Peace and Security. The second instrument is the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism. It should be noted that this item has been on the General Assembly's agenda for 22 years. The third instrument is the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. The adoption of these three instruments of major importance at the same session is in itself an exceptional event, which should be highlighted.

One of the General Assembly's essential goals is to offer a forum for discussion, a unique global platform for the leaders of 185 Member States to present their views each year on the world situation. In this regard, the work of this session, during which 162 agenda items were considered, offers a wealth of lessons. It has been a font of imagination, creativity and the spirit of solidarity.

In this regard, we have noted with satisfaction the emergence of a true spirit of consensus, which has been evident on many occasions during our work, particularly during our consideration of such sensitive matters as the financial situation of the Organization, the question of external debt, and the strengthening of humanitarian assistance. At this stage of our work, we have adopted a total of 295 resolutions, 229 of them without a vote. Member States must therefore be congratulated on their positive attitude, and we must express the hope that this trend will continue to be strengthened, because clearly that could only better reflect our commitment to responding appropriately to the problems of our times.

The picture of the world situation painted by many high-level representatives of Member States reflects a feeling which I believe to be widely shared: that we are still in a period of transition that offers extraordinary opportunities for building a true international community but that also contains the seeds of various threats which, if not eliminated in time, could engender new rifts within the international community and perhaps even condemn us to deadlock.

In the early 1990s, we were all more or less — and certainly more in the northern countries of the North than in those of the South — victims of a sort of illusion: we believed that the end of the cold war would give painless birth, as if by magic, to what was then called a "new world order", bringing peace, equity and solidarity among peoples and nations. The end of the East-West bipolarity was indeed reflected in the speedy settlement, under the auspices of the United Nations, of several regional conflicts that had been stirred up and maintained, often artificially, by the ideological rivalry of the era. But other regional conflicts have endured because, they are deeply rooted in the histories of some nations. In this respect, we have witnessed in various parts of the world the proliferation of internal conflicts, which have more often than not erupted within multiethnic or multidenominational societies. During the cold war, it had been possible to contain many of these conflicts for decades, without their being actually settled. This Pandora's box, today wide open, certainly is the most threatening and tragic legacy of a time we all know to be past.

The euphoria that followed the end of the cold war has yielded to uncertainty, even a sort of disenchantment, at the "failures" of the San Francisco Charter's system of collective security that have been witnessed in many theatres of operation.

Such questions remain, but I believe that we have emerged from that period of doubt. The general debate and the work of the Main Committees demonstrated notable convergence in the views of Members States on the state of the world, on the foundations of joint action to mobilize States, and on guidelines for the reform that we are convinced the United Nations can no longer defer.

Today's stakes and challenges can now be more clearly and more precisely identified; I shall not rehearse them here. To address most of these issues, the need has been stressed — especially in the Committees — to promote and strengthen international cooperation in numerous spheres, including disarmament, environmental protection and the fight against poverty and organized crime.

Yet, beyond these important post-cold-war matters, the work of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly so far has shown broad agreement on a number of priority goals of the United Nations and on strategies for reaching them. In that connection, we cannot fail to welcome important proposals that Member States made at the highest level during the general debate. I have taken careful note of these, some of which relate to the tasks of the General Assembly, but I shall not enumerate them today. But we must remember that if implemented most of these proposals would greatly contribute to the effectiveness of the Organization.

I wish also to pay tribute to the Secretary-General whose "Agenda for Peace" and "Agenda for Development" constitute a paramount contribution to our common effort to revitalize our approaches, strategies and working methods.

Indeed, as we have heard in this Hall daily, peace and development are two sides of the same coin: there can be no lasting peace without development, or development without peace. Beyond that interaction — which was cited by many Member States as they stressed that poverty, exclusion and inequality among individuals and among nations are one of the main causes of

conflict — the debate clearly showed that we must rethink traditional concepts and approaches with respect to peace and development. The road to peace must pass through gradual nuclear disarmament and limits on the transfer of conventional weapons.

Henceforth we must be more determined to use preventive diplomacy, humanitarian assistance and support for democratization, as well as restoring and rebuilding the social, educational and cultural institutions of nations. In that connection, I have noted various concrete proposals on strengthening and expanding the instruments of preventive diplomacy, and have also noted the emphasis placed on the peace-keeping responsibilities of organizations for regional cooperation in peace-keeping. Much less costly than peace-keeping, preventive diplomacy is a valuable tool for identifying and preventing emerging, looming crises. Using it requires sustained attention and creativity.

Similarly, priority will henceforth be given to an integrated approach to development stressing the links between its economic, demographic, cultural, social and political elements, for as we have heard at this session, development increases freedom, gives tangible form to human dignity and strengthens democracy. On the operational level, the series of major conferences that began in 1992 on the themes of the environment, human rights, population, social development and the status of women provide an opportunity to speak of these elements of development one by one, and to devise the most appropriate strategies. Perhaps it would be a good idea, as proposed, to consider convening a United Nations conference on development soon to guarantee the consistency of these efforts.

In any event, starting next year the General Assembly's working group on the Agenda for Development will do very useful work on all the interrelated aspects of the question of development, which from now on is to be accorded integrated consideration on its five dimensions: peace, the economy, the environment, social justice and democracy. Because of the trend towards the globalization of the economy and of the phenomenon of regionalization, economies must remain open and interdependent. Development strategies must therefore combine assistance, investment and transfer of technology.

Because I am from Africa, I am inevitably touched by the sympathy — in the literal sense of the word — all Member States have shown and by the special attention they have paid with respect to our continent, which faces tragic challenges to peace and development. With specific reference to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, consensus on financing a mechanism for the diversification of Africa's commodities demonstrated the international community's continued interest in Africa's development problems — and, as is known, Africa is one of the priorities for the United Nations.

To achieve our goals in the area of peace and development, the United Nations must heed the words spoken in this Hall and must be a strong, credible Organization with the means to meet our expectations. A dynamics of reform has been set in motion; we must continue, broaden and complete it. In that way we will be true to our ideals and able to meet all the challenges. In statements in the Assembly and in its Committees, I noted a concern and willingness shared by all Member States: to strengthen existing institutional and operational machinery, even at the cost of jolting the habits we have too easily acquired over the years, and to seriously review the working methods of the Assembly and other important bodies such as the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council. We see now the will to deepen the reforms, notably that relating to enlargement of the Security Council, but the precise terms of such a reform remain to be determined. The goal is to increase the transparency of the Council's functioning and to enable all Member States to feel that it is not indifferent to their concerns. I myself will chair the first resumed meeting of the working group on the expansion of the Security Council, which is scheduled for 16 January 1995.

In the financial area, we all heard the Secretary-General's statement here on 12 October 1994 concerning the precarious financial situation of the Organization. I am pleased that the Assembly's response to that statement was commensurate with the seriousness of the situation as reported by the Secretary-General. This matter, crucial for the future of the Organization, will be the object of useful study in the open-ended high-level working group on this subject, which I myself shall chair, to endow the matter with all the political interest it deserves. The Organization's difficult financial situation is in fact a symptom of the need to adapt the United Nations to a changing environment.

However that may be, the reforms to be undertaken within the United Nations must be global and must give us a clear vision of the future of the entire United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions. The general debate at this session showed that there is a

consensus on the urgent, overriding need to revitalize the obligations incumbent on the Organization as we prepare to celebrate our fiftieth anniversary.

Member States are calling for a concrete plan of action because we must take another look at the role played by the Organization in achieving the fundamental goals laid down in the Charter. We have to do so in the light of developments in the international situation and developments new problems that will arise. Member States have expressed the view that we must approach the forthcoming decades with a new and positive perspective on the future.

That is why I undertook broad consultations with many delegations to study the most appropriate way in which the General Assembly could make its contribution to achieving this goal, while taking into account all the thinking, the studies and the research on this question already engaged in both inside the United Nations system and outside it. Very soon I will hold other broad consultations in order to bring this exercise to a conclusion.

We are about to take leave of one another at the end of the present phase of the current session. But before doing so, I feel a duty to express my sincere thanks to all the members of the Assembly for their cooperation and for the contribution they have made to the success of our work.

Allow me, on behalf of the Members of the Assembly, to express our deep gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, our dynamic Secretary-General, for his constant support and useful counsel. This tribute also goes to all the Secretary-General's colleagues, who spared no effort to provide us with the valuable technical assistance we needed to carry out our task properly.

In particular, I wish to thank very sincerely the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly, who helped me admirably and took my place at times, thus allowing me to perform other aspects of my functions.

Similarly, my thanks go to the Chairmen of the various Committees, as well as the other members of their respective Bureaus, whose decisive contribution to the results achieved deserves to be stressed.

Finally, the tribute should be extended to the General Assembly Affairs Division and the many staff members of the Secretariat, whether visible here or not: the conference officers, the editors, the interpreters, the translators, the secretaries, the typists, the security personnel, the messengers, the catering staff and the maintenance staff. All of them have aided us in their various ways by carrying out their tasks professionally and with devotion.

I should like to say how happy I have been to work with Mrs. Rosario Green, the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs. I wish her success in her new functions as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General.

As the year draws to its end and we set off for home, I take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

On the eve of the third millennium, and of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we are more than ever responsible for the success or failure of our Organization. Let us not hesitate, then, to go beyond what seems possible today. A few weeks ago President Mandela reminded us that the United Nations had managed to push back the "frontiers of racism" because, so long as apartheid was raging in South Africa, all mankind felt debased and degraded. It is our duty to do everything possible to push back the frontiers of hatred, intolerance, violence, exclusion and poverty. Let us, then, build together a better world — a world of peace and progress for us and for our children.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.